

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 5, 2007. Claims 1, 3, 5, and 9-11, 13, 15 and 19-22 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 11, 21 and 22 are in independent form. Claims 2, 4 and 6-8, 12, 14 and 16-18 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 1, 3 and 5 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. Favorable reconsideration is requested. The canceled claims will not be further addressed herein.

The specification has been amended to conform the Summary of Invention section to the amended claims.

A Claim To Priority and a certified copy of the priority document for this application were filed on August 7, 2003, as evidenced by the copy of the PAIR printout for this case, a copy of which is attached hereto. Applicant respectfully requests acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the receipt of the certified copy.

Claims 21 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 on the ground that these claims are allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claim 1 has been carefully reviewed and amended to ensure that it conforms to Section 101. Applicant believes that the rejection of Claim 21 has been obviated, and its withdrawal is respectfully requested. As to Claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that it fully conforms to Section 101. Claim 22 is directed to a computer-readable medium that is readable by a computer storing a program. As stated in the U.S.P.T.O.'s "Interim Guidelines for Examination of Patent Applications for Patent Subject Matter Eligibility," p. 53, "a claimed computer-readable medium encoded with a computer program is a computer element which defines structural and functional

interrelationships between the computer program and the rest of the computer which permit the computer program's functionality to be realized, and it thus statutory." Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 3, 5, and 9-11, 13, 15 and 19-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite and, in the case of Claim 1, as being incomplete for omitting essential structural cooperative relationships of the elements. Claims 1, 3, 5, 11, 13, 15 and 19-22 have been carefully reviewed and amended to ensure that they fully conform to the requirements of Section 112, second paragraph, with special attention to the points raised in paragraphs 5-7 of the Office Action. It is believed that the rejection under Section 112 has been obviated, and its withdrawal is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 5, and 9-11, 13, 15 and 19-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0093521 (Schlonski et al.) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0029474 (Yada).

As shown above, Applicant has amended independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 22 in terms that more clearly define what he regards as his invention. Applicant submits that these amended independent claims, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus that manages a predetermined device capable of performing communication over a network. The apparatus includes: (1) a holding unit configured to hold corresponding information corresponding to first device identification information and second device identification information; (2) an obtaining unit configured to obtain accounting information based on an image forming operation from the

predetermined device; (3) a comparing unit configured to compare a combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with the corresponding information held by the holding unit, and determine whether or not at least one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed; (4) a communication controlling unit configured to control issuance of a notification to an external apparatus in accordance with a result of the comparison by the comparing unit, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses; and (5) an updating unit configured to update the corresponding information held by the holding unit in accordance with an update notification, for updating the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information, from the external apparatus. The notification issued by the communication controlling unit includes information indicating that either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and the communication controlling unit restricts issuing the accounting information obtained by the obtaining unit to the external apparatus if the comparing unit determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and issues the accounting information obtained by the obtaining unit to the external apparatus if the corresponding information is updated by the updating unit.

Among other notable features of Claim 1 are: (1) an obtaining unit configured to obtain accounting information based on an image forming operation from the predetermined

device; (2) a communication controlling unit configured to control issuance of a notification to an external apparatus in accordance with a result of the comparison by the comparing unit, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses; and (3) that the communication controlling unit restricts issuing the accounting information obtained by the obtaining unit to the external apparatus if the comparing unit determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and issues the accounting information obtained by the obtaining unit to the external apparatus if the corresponding information is updated by the updating unit.

Schlonski relates to a system and method of retaining data about a plurality of assets, the assets (i.e., printers, computers, etc.) including network assets and non-network assets. A file is associated with each asset. The system includes a server and an asset manager which retains information about each asset. Schlonski discusses that when a network printer is detected from an Active Directory Partition (a directory service), the server checks its database to determine if the printer needs to be added. If the printer already exists within the database, the Active Directory Partition attribute is then updated for that printer's record in the database. However, Applicant has found nothing in Schlonski that would teach or suggest "an obtaining unit configured to obtain accounting information based on an image forming operation from the predetermined device" or a "a communication controlling unit configured to control issuance of a notification to an external apparatus in accordance with a result of the comparison by the comparing unit, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a

predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses ..., wherein the communication controlling unit restricts issuing the accounting information obtained by the obtaining unit to the external apparatus if the comparing unit determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and issues the accounting information obtained by the obtaining unit to the external apparatus if the corresponding information is updated by the updating unit,” as recited in Claim 1.

Yada does not remedy the deficiencies of Schlonski. Yada relates to an asset management system wherein a lease expiration date (one property of the asset) is compared against the current date (a property that is not associated with the asset) (Yada, paragraph 17). Thus, Yada does not appear to suggest the desirability of tracking changes of device information, but instead is concerned about using information about the devices to make business decisions. Thus, Applicant has found nothing in Yada that would teach or suggest “an obtaining unit configured to obtain accounting information based on an image forming operation from the predetermined device” or a “a communication controlling unit configured to control issuance of a notification to an external apparatus in accordance with a result of the comparison by the comparing unit, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses ..., wherein the communication controlling unit restricts issuing the accounting information obtained by the obtaining unit to the external apparatus if the comparing unit determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and issues the accounting

information obtained by the obtaining unit to the external apparatus if the corresponding information is updated by the updating unit,” as recited in Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is patentable over Schlonski and Yada, whether considered separately or in any permissible combination (if any).

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant’s opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against Claim 1.

Independent Claims 11, 21 and 22 are method, computer program and recording medium claims, respectively, corresponding to apparatus Claim 1, and are believed to be patentable the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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Information processing apparatus, information recording medium

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Transaction History

Date	Transaction Description
02-05-2007	Mail Non-Final Rejection
02-01-2007	Non-Final Rejection
08-06-2003	Information Disclosure Statement considered
01-24-2007	Case Docketed to Examiner in GAU
06-29-2006	Case Docketed to Examiner in GAU
06-17-2006	Request for Classification Division Decision
09-30-2005	Transfer Inquiry to GAU
08-07-2003	Request for Foreign Priority (Priority Papers May Be Included)
08-06-2003	Reference capture on IDS
08-06-2003	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed
09-23-2005	IFW TSS Processing by Tech Center Complete
09-23-2003	Application Return from OIPE
09-23-2003	Application Return TO OIPE
09-23-2003	Application Dispatched from OIPE
09-23-2003	Application Is Now Complete
09-06-2003	Cleared by OIPE CSR
08-15-2003	IFW Scan & PACR Auto Security Review
06-30-2003	Initial Exam Team nnn

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